
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE HAWAII TOURISM AUTHORITY TO COORDINATE WITH THE
HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY TO CREATE A MORE WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT
FOR CHINESE VISITORS.

1 WHEREAS, the tourism industry constitutes the largest
2 single contributor to the State's gross domestic product,
3 representing approximately 21 percent of its economy; and
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5 WHEREAS, Hawaii's top four visitor markets have
6 traditionally been the western United States, eastern United
7 States, Japan, and Canada; and
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9 WHEREAS, in terms of visitor days among the top four
10 markets in 2013, the U.S. West and U.S. East showed flat growth,
11 while Japan and Canada showed only modest gains; and
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13 WHEREAS, in contrast, visitor days from Hawaii's Other Asia
14 tourism market (excluding Japan but including China, Korea,
15 Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore) increased by 16.5 percent; and
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17 WHEREAS, it is important for the State to diversify its
18 visitor markets so that weakness in a particular market at any
19 given time can be offset by strength in another; and
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21 WHEREAS, a particularly promising source of visitors for
22 Hawaii is the Chinese market; and
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24 WHEREAS, as the economy of China, already the world's
25 second-largest economy, continues to grow, more members of that
26 nation's emerging middle class will be able to afford to travel
27 overseas; and
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29 WHEREAS, in 2013, approximately 97,300,000 Chinese citizens
30 traveled abroad, about 1,800,000 of whom visited the United



1 States, and of these visitors, 125,011 arrived in Hawaii and
2 spent an average of \$394 per person per day, the highest among
3 all visitor groups, including those from Japan; and

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5 WHEREAS, since November 1, 2012, residents of Taiwan have
6 been able to travel to the United States under the Visa Waiver
7 Program; and

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9 WHEREAS, on November 10, 2014, the governments of the
10 United States and China announced that the two nations would
11 begin granting visas valid for up to a decade to each other's
12 citizens; and

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14 WHEREAS, nonstop air service from Asia to Hawaii has grown
15 significantly recently, including re-established service from
16 Taipei, new service from Beijing, and expanded service from
17 Shanghai; and

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19 WHEREAS, although the absolute number of Chinese travelers
20 to Hawaii is currently a fraction of the number of Japanese
21 visitors to the State, the Chinese market is booming and poised
22 to experience further growth while the Japanese market has
23 plateaued and may decline; and

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25 WHEREAS, over the past few decades, the hospitality
26 industry in Hawaii has gained valuable insights and experience
27 regarding the preferences and expectations of Japanese travelers
28 and has worked diligently to create a welcoming environment for
29 them; and

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31 WHEREAS, as they have with Japanese visitors, it is
32 crucially important that hotels, restaurants, stores,
33 attractions, and other tourism-related businesses in Hawaii take
34 measures to meet the unique needs and expectations of Chinese
35 visitors; and

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37 WHEREAS, fostering a visitor environment that is welcoming
38 to any cultural group requires a visitor industry work force
39 that is well-versed in the language, culture, customs, and
40 expectations of that culture; now, therefore,

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42 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
43 Twenty-eighth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular
44 Session of 2015, the Senate concurring, that the Hawaii Tourism



1 Authority is urged to coordinate with trade organizations,
2 including the Hawaii Lodging and Tourism Association, Hawaii
3 Restaurant Association, Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau,
4 Hawaii Transportation Association, and others in the hospitality
5 industry, to create a more welcoming environment for Chinese
6 visitors; and
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8 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that all tourism-related businesses
9 in Hawaii are urged to, among other things:

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11 (1) Hire additional Chinese-speaking staff;
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13 (2) Provide training in Chinese culture to staff; and
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15 (3) Make greater use of the Chinese language in signs and
16 other written materials; and
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18 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Hawaii's congressional
19 delegation is requested to take steps to realize amendments to
20 the H-1B non-immigrant visa "specialty occupation" qualifying
21 criteria to facilitate visa eligibility for foreign workers who
22 have a high degree of specialized knowledge of reading, writing,
23 and speaking at an honorific level to international visitors
24 with an understanding and respect required in visitors'
25 countries of origin to allow Hawaii's visitor industry to
26 recruit and employ the necessary work force to realize these
27 objectives; and
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29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
30 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the members of Hawaii's
31 congressional delegation, the Governor, and the interim
32 President and Chief Executive Officer of the Hawaii Tourism
33 Authority.

